



Senior Corps programs are a great way to engage Tribal Elders in national service. Senior Corps taps into the skills, talents, and experience of more than 220,000 Americans age 55 and over to meet a wide range of community challenges through a network of three programs — the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program, and RSVP.



The Foster Grandparent Program

Established in 1965, the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is one of the oldest intergenerational programs in the country. The volunteers provide person-to-person service to children in the Tribal community, supporting early childhood and K-12 education to help the children learn academic and life skills critical to their development and future success. Foster Grandparent volunteers serve in schools as mentors, tutors and role models to children at risk of falling behind, and to those with disabilities and/or those with other special needs. In addition to schools, Foster Grandparent volunteers serve in organizations like hospitals, child care programs, Head Start programs, and other residential settings. Through these intergenerational relationships, the Elders provide impactful service to help young people become productive members of society, while they remain active and connected to their communities. They may also help to transfer cultural knowledge and customs, including language, from one generation to another.

Navajo Tribe Foster Grandparent Program - Window Rock, Arizona: The Navajo Nation Foster Grandparent Program has celebrated 52 years of Foster Grandparent programming, with funding first awarded in 1965, making it one of the very first Foster Grandparent Programs. Today, the Nation engages over 120 Foster Grandparent volunteers, serving an estimated 500 children annually at over 50 sites in Arizona and New Mexico, including public, boarding, and community schools, and Head Start and day care centers. Volunteers serve the Navajo children by teaching them about culture, tradition, arts/crafts, writing and speaking in the Navajo language, and assisting the school teachers with implementation of the assigned curriculum.

**Throughout the country, 400 Tribal Elders
serve in Senior Corps programs.**



The Senior Companion Program

Established in 1974, the Senior Companion Program promotes independence and prevents isolation by providing peer assistance and friendship that helps frail, older adults remain in their homes instead of having to move to more costly institutional care. Senior Companion volunteers help with tasks such as grocery shopping, paying bills, light housekeeping and other tasks, or just being a friend to someone who may be homebound or who just might not have much contact with others. Volunteers also provide respite to give family members or professional caregivers time off to run their own errands or to take care of their own appointments.

Elder Senior Companion volunteers provide other elders in need with person-to-person service and offer support (particularly respite) to family caregivers. Many also help their elder clients and family members mitigate and prevent elder abuse, including financial abuse and protection against financial fraud.

Pueblo of Zuni Senior Companion Program – Zuni, New Mexico: As job opportunities in this highly rural and isolated community are few, many adults find employment off of the Pueblo. As a result, Elders face a growing need for support services as close family member involvement becomes less prevalent. Senior Companions volunteer support such as paying bills, shopping for groceries, and providing light housekeeping helps Elders stay where they want to be: at home, in their community. Their service also offers friendship to other Elders who might not have much contact with the larger community.

RSVP

Established in 1971, RSVP is one of America's largest volunteer efforts, engaging more than 230,000 older adults, retired or not, who use their skills and life experience in volunteer service that helps solve challenges facing communities. RSVP volunteers strengthen public and nonprofit agencies by building the infrastructure needed to efficiently and effectively mobilize experienced and skilled volunteers with vital programs and services. RSVP volunteers serve in diverse volunteer roles that may include: intergenerational education; access to care including opioid abuse/prevention; transportation services that support aging in place; and housing services and activities in evidence-based programs. Additionally, they help increase the capacity of local organizations by recruiting and managing other volunteers.

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association Retired and Senior Volunteer Program - Anchorage, Alaska: The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association Retired and Senior Volunteer Program supports Elders by engaging entities in the community to promote giving back, utilizing acquired skills, feeling connected, enhancing the community, feeling accomplished, maintaining a high quality of life, serving others, and addressing community needs. RSVP volunteers focus on issues related to Healthy Futures with activities such as: assisting Elders to access health care, providing companionship and friendly visiting; and assisting individuals to achieve financially independent goals. These activities will help support the quality of life for Elders as they age in place in the communities that they have always called “home.”

Other Senior Corps Tribal Programming

Chickasaw Nation Foster Grandparent Program	Oklahoma	Elders provide literacy development, Chickasaw language and culture discussions, math and science tutoring through the Chickasaw Nation Child Development Center.
Omaha Nation Community Response Team Foster Grandparent Program	Nebraska	Elder volunteers care for children with disabilities, help Children to learn to read in schools and afterschool programs, provide one-on-one tutoring, and service as mentors to troubled teens and young mothers. Additionally, they help younger generations preserve the culture through intergenerational community events like pow-wows, storytelling and language classes.
Pueblo of Zuni Foster Grandparent Program	New Mexico	Elder Foster Grandparent volunteers support children from pre-K through middle school. Children are encouraged to show the teachings that they learn from their Elders annually during Indian Day by demonstrating how they follow directions, participate in song and dance, and understand their identity as Zuni Indians.
Round Valley Indian Tribe Foster Grandparent Program	California	Elders provide literacy development, Chickasaw language and culture discussions, math and science tutoring through the Chickasaw Nation Child Development Center.